

**Root Chakra:**

The root chakra is located at the base of the spine; more specifically at the space between the anus and the genitals<sup>1</sup> (Berkers). It is the most physical chakra and is centered in grounding an individual. Development of this chakra by practice of Muladhara banda<sup>2</sup> helps one to keep focus and stay grounded despite constant chaos that is imminent and inevitable in life (Berkers). To develop the root chakra, it is suggested that one sit in a comfortable seated position and inhale while contracting the perineum and then to exhale while letting it relax. One may also choose to perform muladhara banda in ukatasana<sup>3</sup> (Berkers). This variation requires that one stay focused on balance as well as being grounded.

The color of the root chakra is ruby red (R.). While opening and developing the root chakra, it is suggested that one focus on a revolving red circle. The circle doesn't move very fast because it is the first chakra; it is at the base and is the one which needs to be developed the most. One can use mudras<sup>4</sup> in order to facilitate the opening of the root chakra (Berkers). One can touch the tips of the thumbs and index fingers together (as in Figure 1) with palms up and lay the wrists on the inner-thighs. This mudra is said to help one concentrate on being grounded and "in-the-moment" (Berkers).



Figure 1: the root chakra mudra (Berkers).

Along with the physical practice of contracting the perineum and use of the above mudra, one can also include the repetition of a bija<sup>5</sup>. The suggested bija in opening the root chakra is "LAM" (Berkers). One should chant this bija with the intention of becoming more grounded and focused. When this chakra is out of balance it causes one to be worried and full of despair, confused, and lost. Developing it using the above-suggested methods can help one to regain/attain peace and guidance in a chaotic and direction-deficient world.

Many idioms in English have expressed the under-developed root chakra: "losing your foot," "getting the rug pulled out from under you," and "losing your ground." "Getting back on your feet [again]" requires the development of the root chakra. One must focus on being grounded and being "here" (101).

In my own life, I have noticed that my root chakra is out of alignment and that I often find myself feeling confused, upset, worried, and depressed. I work a full time job and I attend college full time. My schedule is constantly full of things I must do and I never feel as though I have time to just sit down and relax. Because of these things, I'm constantly on the go and am frequently stressed that I'm not going to make the next appointment or accomplish the next paper. I'm worried about losing my job for poor performance and failing school for poor attendance. This cycle only perpetuates itself as time goes on, it seems. I spend time and energy at work focusing on improving my statistics so that I don't get fired, and I have little energy to go to school the next day. Likewise, when I really focus on school and attend, I give it my all and when I go to work, I'm so exhausted that I don't perform well.

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<sup>1</sup> called the perineum

<sup>2</sup> perineum contractions

<sup>3</sup> chair pose

<sup>4</sup> hand positions to open chakras

<sup>5</sup> seed word for a mantra

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Simply, my root chakra is in need of development. I often find myself “stealing” time to catch a movie or eat out. What I mean by this is that I don’t allow myself to have time to relax because I’m constantly busy. I do have a lot of things to do, but I don’t feel as though I accomplish anything—ever. My plan is to develop my root chakra by use of meditation and by practicing muladhara banda at least three times weekly while I’m seated for lunch. By focusing my mind on being grounded I can become more peaceful and relaxed. I will be less confused and lost. Through development of the root chakra, I will keep my feet on the ground and be more confident in my ability to complete the tasks I must perform. School and work will become more manageable—pew!

### **Works Cited**

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